



**For Immediate Release**

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**For More Information:**

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**Investment in Food, Nutrition in Child Care and Head Start Lapses, 56 National Organizations Urge Congress to Act Now**

Home Grown is among 56 national organizations urging Congress to extend the Keep Kids Fed Act (KKFA) meal reimbursement increases for an additional year to help child care providers and schools feed children over the summer and during the upcoming school year.

In June of 2022, Congress passed the bipartisan KKFA to respond to the ongoing fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic on child nutrition programs in schools and child care. Now we are facing a triple threat to child care with the end of federal assistance to supplement poverty wages, congressional bottlenecks on continued funding for the base program, and the end of pandemic provisions to supplement child care meal reimbursements and put a hold on a means test that hurts child care providers and children. Food inflation remains high, but the essential provisions of the KKFA ended on June 30, 2023.

The early childhood workforce in Early Head Start, Head Start, child care centers, and family child care is stretching every dollar to care for and feed babies and young children. Cutting child care investments is not the answer, especially while one out of three child care providers is herself food insecure. This is a perfect storm of needed aid being abruptly cut off. Without relief, child care programs could close, parents will be unable to work, and there will be an increase in young children and even providers themselves going hungry.

At the end of September, Child Care Stabilization funds will end at the same time Congress is facing extreme challenges to make needed increases in FY24 for programs like the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Head Start. The combined impact of all of these funding streams abruptly ending while family and early childhood workforce needs are acute will threaten access to child care for working parents.

“Home-based child care providers care for more than 12 million children under the age of 13 and a significant portion of these children are experiencing hunger. The providers caring for these children also experience hunger at alarming rates with one in three child care providers reported experiencing hunger themselves. Policy and practice changes are needed to ensure equity, accessibility, and full potential of ensuring children are fed nutritious meals without placing burden on the child care providers. We are proud to stand with more than 50 national organizations to urge Congress to act quickly.”

Read the complete letter [here](#).

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